

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

**1. Name of Property**Historic name: Catoctin Creek Bridge 2024 UpdateOther names/site number: John G. Lewis Memorial Bridge; DHR #053-0131Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**2. Location**Street & number: Featherbed Lane/ Route 673City or town: Lovettsville State: VA County: LoudounNot For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

     national X statewide      local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A      B X C      D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☐

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☒

Public – Federal

☐

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☒

Object

☐

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related (vehicular)

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related (vehicular)

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Pratt Truss

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: METAL: Iron

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Catoctin Creek Bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1974. An updated description of the bridge has been prepared to document the resource's current condition. The Catoctin Creek Bridge, more recently referred to as the John G. Lewis Memorial Bridge, is located in the Town of Lovettsville in northern Virginia. Roughly oriented east-west, the bridge carries Featherbed Lane, a gravel roadway, across the Catoctin Creek. The road and bridge are surrounded by farms and estates. The single-lane, single-span bridge is of Pratt through truss configuration and measures approximately 159 feet by 14 feet. It is one of the longest surviving late nineteenth century metal truss bridges in Virginia. the bridge was listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places in 1974. An updated, more detailed description is below.

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#### Narrative Description

##### Location and Setting

The Catoctin Creek Bridge is located in the Town of Lovettsville in northern Virginia. Roughly oriented east-west, the bridge carries Featherbed Lane, a gravel roadway, across the Catoctin Creek, which joins the Potomac River to the northeast in Lovettsville. The road and bridge are surrounded by farms and estates.

##### Description

This 159-foot-long, single-span, single-lane iron truss bridge is of Pratt through truss

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configuration. Trusses are composed of nine panels each and are spaced 13 feet-10 inches on centers. The panels measure 17 feet-5.5 inches long and 22 feet-2 inches in height from the top chord to the bottom chord. The panels are connected by pins with hexagonal nuts. The three central panels feature counters with turnbuckles. The top chords and inclined endposts are built-up members consisting of riveted channels, cover plates, and stay plates. The verticals consist of riveted channels and lacing bars, and the diagonals are formed by eyebars. Each portal strut consists of two riveted angles connected by lattice bars and portal knee braces, also connected by lattice bars. Knee braces connect the verticals and the upper lateral struts. The top chords are connected by diagonal lateral rod bracing. The endposts slant at a near 45- degree angle.<sup>1</sup>

Located on the inclined southwest and northeast endposts are rectangular bridge plates listing the members of the Loudoun County Bridge Committee: “Geo. F. Eamich/Chairman/E.G. Gaufman/F.M. Carter/Thos. R. Smith/N.B. Peacock/P.W. Carper/Bridge Committee/Alfred Staunton/Engineer.” The remnants of a circular fabricator’s plate is riveted above the rectangular plate on the northeastern endpost and reads: “The Variety Iron Works Cleveland O. Bridge Builder.”<sup>2</sup>

The floor system consists of eight built-up floor beams with 15-inch-deep webs, six 10-inch-deep I- beam stringers with varied spacing, and a timber deck connected by nailers to the stringers. Below the deck, lateral bracing consists of rods. The east end of the bridge superstructure is supported by roller expansion bearings resting on an abutment with an adjacent wing wall. The fixed bearings of the west end also rest on an abutment. The roadway is 11 feet-2 inches wide, and deck to portal clearance is 21 ½ feet.<sup>3</sup>

Stringers were replaced in 1967, and a major rehabilitation, including painting and deck replacement, was completed in 2003.<sup>4</sup> Recent work on the bridge involved the replacement of the east and west abutments, cracked truss components, the deck, and guardrails, as well as the addition of steel beams to the underside of the deck and a central pier. The original abutments were made of poured concrete and ashlar stone. The new abutments, as well as the pier, consist of concrete faced with faux stone with a pattern similar to Virginia Drystack and with a color scheme matching the former abutments. Formerly, the bridge had an asphalt covered timber deck.<sup>5</sup> At the time of documentation, the deck consisted of thick timber planking.

### **Integrity**

The Catoctin Creek Bridge is an excellent example of the Pratt truss bridge type, historically very popular on secondary roads throughout Virginia. Despite various rehabilitation campaigns, the bridge retains its integrity of design, materials, setting, feeling, workmanship, and association. Most materials are original, with the exception of such elements as the deck, stringers, and abutments, which have been replaced in kind. The original workmanship and design of the superstructure is readily apparent. As the bridge was historically relocated, it does not possess integrity of location. However, the current setting is similar to its original setting, and the bridge is still situated over a waterway, providing integrity of setting and feeling.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☒ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENGINEERING

TRANSPORTATION

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**Period of Significance**

1889

1932

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**Significant Dates**

N/A

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**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

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**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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**Architect/Builder**

Variety Iron Works Company

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

At the time that the Catoctin Creek Bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1974, the bridge was listed at the statewide level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Transportation and under Criterion C in the area of Engineering. The period of significance was broadly defined as 20<sup>th</sup> century. This nomination update has been prepared to provide documentation of the bridge's current condition and a more detailed statement of significance. Built around 1889 and originally located on Route 7 (today's Route 54) across Goose Creek, east of Leesburg, the bridge represents a common, economical bridge solution applied to a relatively long span. An excellent example of a well-known late-nineteenth to early twentieth-century bridge type once prevalent on secondary roads throughout Virginia, the bridge is associated with significant trends in the development of road-related transportation in the Lovettsville area. Pratt through truss bridges once were common in Virginia, in part due to their engineering and design attributes that made them suitable for a broad range of settings and cost-effective to manufacture. As roads were widened and vehicular tonnage increased through the twentieth century, many Pratt truss bridges were replaced with bridge types built of newer materials, especially prestressed concrete and steel I-beams, and engineered to carry heavier loads. Today, the Catoctin Creek Bridge is the last single-span Pratt iron truss bridge located in Northern Virginia. The one-lane bridge was moved to its present location ca. 1932 as vehicular traffic increased, necessitating a two-lane bridge with a reconfigured approach. Criteria Consideration B for relocated resources is met because the bridge's significance is due to its engineering and its historic association with early transportation in the region.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Catoctin Creek Bridge is a representative surviving example of a popular truss type built to specifications by county authorities and bridge companies between 1875-1925 in Virginia. They were relatively inexpensive and easy to manufacture, ship, and erect on-site. As a result, Pratt metal truss bridges found widespread application in rural areas during that time period.<sup>1</sup>

During the Great Flood of 1889, the same massive storm system that caused the Johnstown, Pennsylvania Flood on May 31, arrived in the region on June 1 and 2 and caused severe flooding in the Potomac River watershed. The unexpected storms wreaked havoc along the upper Potomac River, Little River, Catoctin Creek, and Goose Creek in Loudoun County. The covered bridge which carried the Leesburg and Alexandria Turnpike (old Route 7) over Goose Creek was washed out, and numerous other bridges throughout northern Virginia were also destroyed. Within days of the flood, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors moved to restore the Goose Creek bridge and six other destroyed or damaged bridges throughout the county, including two bridges over the Catoctin, one in Waterford and the other in the Lovettsville District. In June of that year, the Board appointed a Bridge Committee consisting of George F. Eamich, Chairman (also chair of the Board of Supervisors); F.W. Smith, E.G.



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Caufman, F.M. Carter, Thomas B. Smith, N.B. Peacock, and P.W. Carper. The committee was to review proposals for the rebuilding of the damaged or destroyed bridges.<sup>2</sup>

In 1899, the county Board of Supervisors ordered that all iron bridges in the county be painted. The bridge was present by that time, as P.W. Carper and E.F. Burch were appointed by the board to “examine and view” the bridge over Goose Creek on the Leesburg Turnpike to determine if it required repairs.<sup>3</sup>

The Board of Supervisor’s decision to build a Pratt truss bridge across Goose Creek was characteristic of county and municipal engineering practice in the late nineteenth century. Hundreds of metal truss bridges had been constructed across the country by the 1880s, and many hundreds more would be built in subsequent decades. Initially, truss bridges were constructed of wood. Cast iron truss bridges were first constructed during the 1840s along the route of the Erie Canal. Between 1890 and 1910, structural steel’s greater tensile strength led to its preference over wrought iron, despite iron’s superior resistance to corrosion.<sup>4</sup>

By the early twentieth century, a wide variety of truss types had been developed. One of the most popular and important was the Pratt truss, patented by Thomas and Caleb Pratt in 1844 and built from the mid-nineteenth century well into the twentieth century. The vertical members of this particular type of truss bridge are compressed, while its diagonal members resist the tensile force. In a Pratt through truss bridge, the top chords are connected with lateral bracing, and the deck is located slightly above the bottom chord.<sup>5</sup>

The Bridge Committee appointed in 1889 by the Board of Supervisors chose the Variety Iron Works Co. of Cleveland, Ohio, to fabricate and build the truss. The company was incorporated in 1866 and actively manufactured bridges from 1888 through at least 1901. It expanded into the fabrication of metal truss bridges after their main plant was rebuilt following a fire in 1884. In 1898, the company specialized in bridges, buildings, and boilers. The bridge is one of only two known bridges built by Variety Iron Works in the state of Virginia.<sup>6</sup>

Due to increased traffic on Route 54 (the pre-1934 number for Route 7), close calls on the one-lane bridge, and steep grades leading down to it, the state replaced it with a two-span, steel Warren pony truss bridge in 1932. The one-lane bridge was moved to its current site, carrying Featherbed Lane/Route 673 across Catoctin Creek.<sup>7</sup>

In 1974, the bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and designated a Virginia Historic Landmark.<sup>8</sup> The bridge was recently rehabilitated to increase its load capacity and meet current safety requirements.

The Catoctin Creek Bridge is significant in the area of Engineering as an intact example of a Pratt truss, a common, economical bridge solution applied to a relatively long span. At 159 feet in length, the bridge is one of the longest surviving late nineteenth century metal truss bridges in Virginia.<sup>9</sup> Today, it is the last single-span Pratt iron truss bridge located in Northern Virginia.

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The bridge is significant in the area of Engineering as one of only two known bridges built by the Variety Iron Works Company and as a once-prevalent bridge type built to specifications by county authorities and bridge companies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Virginia.

## **ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C. Spero and Company 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> P.A.C. Spero and Company 1994.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Eugene M. Scheel, *Loudoun Discovered: Communities, Corners & Crossroads - Vol. 2: Leesburg & the Old Carolina Road*. (Leesburg, Virginia: The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, 2002), 34; P.A.C. Spero and Company 1994.

<sup>8</sup> P.A.C. Spero and Company 1994.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

P.A.C. Spero and Company. Virginia Department of Transportation Bridge No. 6051. Philadelphia: Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), 1994.

Scheel, Eugene M. *Loudoun Discovered: Communities, Corners & Crossroads - Vol. 2: Leesburg & the Old Carolina Road*. Leesburg: The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, 2002.

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff. *Catoctin Creek Bridge, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. Richmond: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 1973.

Volkert. Regular Inspection Report for State Bridge No. 6051. Fairfax: Virginia Department of Transportation, Northern Virginia District, 2015.

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### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☒ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

☒ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # VA-110

☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☒ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☒ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond; Department of Transportation, Richmond; Loudoun County, Virginia

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR #053-0131

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property <1 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 39.231944 Longitude: 77.592222

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Catoctin Creek Bridge structure encompasses an area measuring approximately 159 feet by 14 feet. The historic boundary is coterminous with the bridge's perimeter.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the bridge superstructure (the deck, trusses, etc.) that represent the significant features associated with the structure.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Meredith McCulley

organization: Commonwealth Heritage Group

street & number: 14102 Sullyfield Cir Suite 150A

city or town: Chantilly state: VA zip code: 20151

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e-mail: mmculley@chg-inc.com

telephone: 845-901-9096

date: January 2024

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Catoctin Creek Bridge

City or Vicinity: Lovettsville

County: Loudoun

State: Virginia

Photographer: Meredith McCulley

Date Photographed: December 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph Number	Camera View
1	Oblique view, bridge from west end, camera facing east
2	East abutment and pier, camera facing east
3	Western bridge approach, camera facing northeast
4	West abutment, camera facing northwest
5	Oblique view, bridge from west bank, camera facing northeast
6	Plaques on southwest endpost, camera facing northeast
7	View across bridge from deck, camera facing northeast
8	Plaque on northeast endpost, camera facing southwest
9	Oblique view, south side from east bank, camera facing west

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10	West abutment and pier, camera facing west
11	Exterior view, south side guardrail, deck, and outer stringer, camera facing northwest
12	Oblique view, north side from east bank, camera facing southwest
13	Pier and west abutment, camera facing southwest
14	East abutment, camera facing southeast
15	Underside of deck, camera facing southwest
16	Pier and underside of deck, camera facing southwest
17	Meeting of deck and outer stringer, south side, camera facing northwest
18	Oblique view of pier and underside, north side, camera facing southwest
19	View across bridge from east approach, looking southwest
20	East bridge approach, looking southwest

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

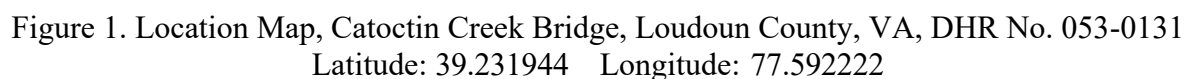
Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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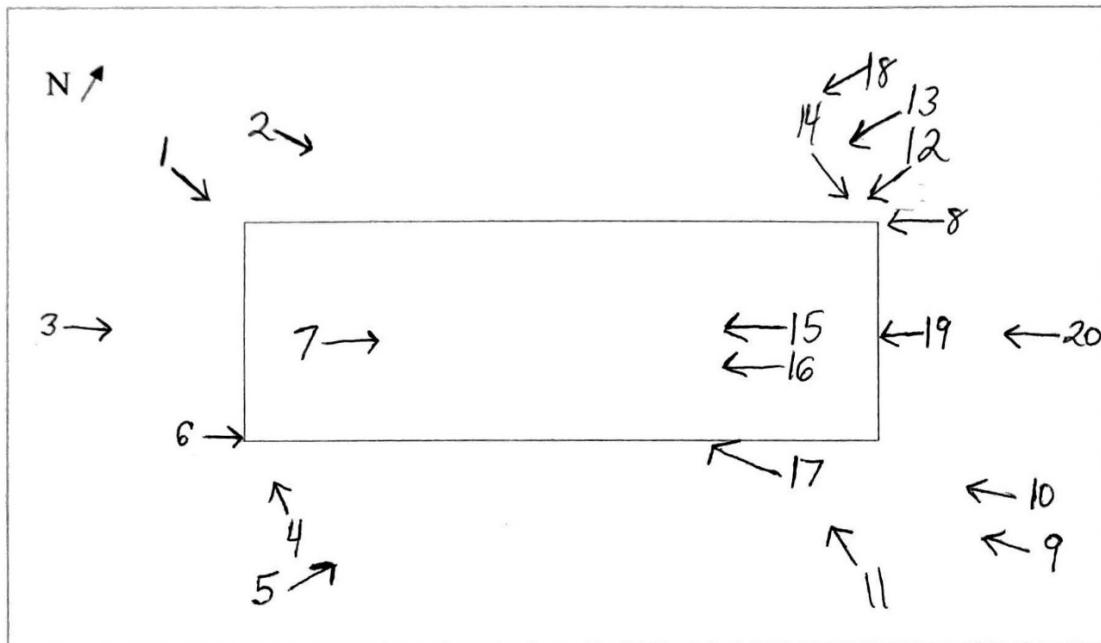


Figure 2. Photo Key, Catoctin Creek Bridge, Loudoun County, VA, DHR No. 053-0131